

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method of promoting merchandise, the method comprising:
2 receiving a communication from a sender;
3 prompting the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender; and
4 transmitting a communication to the sender, wherein the wireless
5 communication comprises an advertisement that is related to the
6 merchandise of interest.
- 1 2. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the advertisement comprises a
2 message to be received by a wireless communication device.
- 1 3. A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises audible
2 information.
- 1 4. A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises graphical
2 information.
- 1 5. A method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the message comprises video
2 information.
- 1 6. A method as defined in Claim 2, further comprising:
2 transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the
3 merchandise of interest.
- 1 7. A method as defined in Claim 6, wherein the coupon comprises a text
2 message to be received by the wireless communication device.

- 1 8. A method as defined in Claim 6, wherein the coupon comprises graphical
2 information to be received by the wireless communication device.
- 1 9. A method as defined in Claim 7, wherein the coupon is transmitted at the
2 option of the sender.
- 1 10. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein prompting comprises:
2 transmitting a wireless communication to the sender, the wireless
3 communication comprising an audibly discernable list of shopping
4 centers; and
5 receiving a selection of a shopping center from the sender.
- 1 11. A method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a shopping center
3 selected by the sender.
- 1 12. A method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a
3 shopping center selected by the sender; and
4 receiving a store selection from the sender.
- 1 13. A method as defined in Claim 12, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a store selected
3 by the sender.

- 1 14. A method as defined in Claim 12, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a
3 store selected by the sender; and
4 receiving a merchandise selection from the sender.
- 1 15. A method as defined in Claim 14, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to merchandise
3 selected by the sender.
- 1 16. A method as defined in Claim 15, further comprising:
2 transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the
3 merchandise selected by the sender.
- 1 17. A method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise
3 available at a source specified by the sender.
- 1 18. A method as defined in Claim 17, further comprising:
2 receiving from the sender a merchandise selection.
- 1 19. A method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising:
2 transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is applicable to
3 merchandise selected by the sender.
- 1 20. A method as defined in Claim 19, wherein the coupon comprises textual
2 information to be received on a wireless communications device.

- 1 21. A method as defined in Claim 19, wherein the coupon comprises graphical
2 information to be received on a wireless communications device.

- 1 22. A method of obtaining information regarding merchandise, the method
2 comprising:
3 transmitting a wireless communication that specifies merchandise and a
4 source of the merchandise;
5 receiving on a wireless communications device information regarding
6 specified merchandise.
- 1 23. A method as defined in Claim 22, wherein the information comprises an
2 advertisement.
- 1 24. A method as defined in Claim 23, wherein the information comprises a
2 coupon.
- 1 25. A method as defined in Claim 24, wherein the information comprises a
2 text message.
- 1 26. A method as defined in Claim 22, further comprising:
2 receiving a prompt that facilitates identification of merchandise of interest.
- 1 27. A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprise an audibly
2 discernible list of shopping centers.
- 1 28. A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprises an
2 audibly discernible list of stores in a selected shopping center.

- 1 29. A method as defined in Claim 26, wherein the prompt comprises a list of
2 sources of merchandise.
- 1 30. A method as defined in Claim 29, wherein the prompt comprise an audibly
2 discernible identification of merchandise form the specified source.

1 31. An article comprising a machine-readable storage medium that comprises
2 instructions that, if executed, enable a system to:
3 receive a wireless communication from a sender;
4 prompt the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender; and
5 transmit a wireless communication to the sender, wherein the wireless
6 communication comprises an advertisement to the sender, wherein the
7 advertisement is related to the merchandise of interest.

1 32. An article as defined in Claim 31, further comprising instruction that, if
2 executed, enable the system to:
3 transmit a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the
4 merchandise of interest.

1 33. An article as defined in Claim 31, further comprising instruction that, if
2 executed, enable the system to:
3 transmit to the sender and audibly discernible list of shopping centers; and
4 receive from the sender a selection of a shopping center.

1 34. An article as defined in Claim 33, further comprising instruction that, if
2 executed, enable the system to:
3 transmit to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a shopping
4 center selected by the sender; and
5 receive a store selection from the sender.

1 35. An article as defined in Claim 34, further comprising instruction that, if
2 executed, enable the system to:
3 transmit to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a store
4 selected by the sender; and
5 receive a merchandise selection from the sender.

- 1 36. A method of promoting merchandise, the method comprising:
2 receiving at an IVR system a communication from a sender, wherein the
3 communication indicates merchandise of interest to he sender; and
4 transmitting to the sender from the IVR system information related to the
5 merchandise of interest.
- 1 37. A method as defined in Claim 36, wherein the information comprises
2 specials applicable to the merchandise of interest at a particular source of
3 the merchandise of interest.
- 1 38. A method as defined in Claim 37, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender a coupon applicable to the merchandise of
3 interest.
- 1 39. A method as defined in Claim 36, further comprising:
2 prompting the sender to specify merchandise of interest to the sender.
- 1 40. A method as defined in Claim 39, wherein prompting comprises:
2 transmitting a wireless communication to the sender, the wireless
3 communication comprising an audibly discernable list of shopping
4 centers; and
5 receiving a selection of a shopping center from the sender.
- 1 41. A method as defined in Claim 40, further comprising:

2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a shopping center
3 selected by the sender.

1 42. A method as defined in Claim 40, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of stores in a
3 shopping center selected by the sender; and
4 receiving a store selection from the sender.

1 43. A method as defined in Claim 42, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to a store selected
3 by the sender.

1 44. A method as defined in Claim 42, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an audibly discernible list of merchandise in a
3 store selected by the sender; and
4 receiving a merchandise selection from the sender.

1 45. A method as defined in Claim 44, further comprising:
2 transmitting to the sender an advertisement applicable to merchandise
3 selected by the sender.

1 46. A method as defined in Claim 45, further comprising:
2 transmitting a coupon to the sender, wherein the coupon is related to the
3 merchandise selected by the sender.

- 1 47. A method of maintaining customized advertisements, the method
2 comprising:
3 accessing an ad server;
4 entering an advertisement on the ad server; and
5 receiving, in real-time, a confirmation of the advertisement.
- 1 48. A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed
2 through the Internet.
- 1 49. A method as defined in Claim 48, further comprising:
2 viewing a webpage that contains a plurality of windows.
- 1 50. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:
2 receiving at a window a synthesized audible rendition of an advertisement.
- 1 51. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:
2 receiving at a window a recorded voice rendition of an advertisement.
- 1 52. A method as defined in Claim 49, further comprising:
2 receiving at a window a coupon in textual form.
- 1 53. A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed via an
2 e-mail.

- 1 54. A method as defined in Claim 47, wherein the ad server is accessed via a
2 communications network.
- 1 55. A method as defined in Claim 54, wherein the ad server is accessed
2 through use of a wireless communications device.
- 1 56. A method as defined in Claim 54, further comprising:
2 receiving confirmation of the advertisement through use of the wireless
3 communications device.
- 1 57. A method as defined in Claim 47, further comprising:
2 entering in the ad server times at which the advertisement will be
3 disseminated.
- 1 58. A method as defined in Claim 57, further comprising:
2 entering, in advance, on the ad server a commencement date and
3 expiration date applicable to the advertisement.
- 1 59. A method as defined in Claim 57, comprising:
2 specifying a boundary within which advertisements will be sent to a
3 potential customer.
- 1 60. A method as defined in Claim 59, wherein the boundary is the border of a
2 municipal entity.

- 1 61. A method as defined in Claim 59, wherein the boundary is a
2 predetermined distance from a retailer's place of business.

- 1 62. A system comprising:
2 a portal to transmit information to consumers and to receive information
3 from retailers; and
4 an advertisement ser coupled to the portal.
- 1 63. The system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the portal is operative to
2 transmit audio messages to consumers and receive audio messages from
3 consumers.
- 1 64. A system as defined in Claim 63, wherein the portal is operative to
2 navigate a consumer through a sequence of queries and responses to
3 enable a user to obtain information related to merchandise of interest to
4 the user.
- 1 65. A system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the portal is operative to
2 transmit message to and to receive messages from the retailer.
- 1 66. A system as defined in Claim 65, wherein the portal is operative to receive
2 advertisement maintenance messages from retailer and provide
3 confirmation messages to retailers.
- 1 67. A system as defined in Claim 62, wherein the advertisement server
2 comprises:
3 an AD Setup function;
4 a Reporting function; and

5 an Account Setup function.

1 68. A system as defined in Claim 67, wherein the advertisement server is
2 accessible via the Internet.

1 69. A system as defined in Claim 69, wherein the advertisement sever
2 comprises a graphical user interface to enable advertisement maintenance.